

MINUTES
BROWN COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
Monday, March 12, 2012
Green Bay Metro Transportation Center
901 University Avenue
Green Bay, Wisconsin
10:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Diana Brown	<u>X</u>	Sandy Popp	<u>X</u>
Brandon Cooper	<u></u>	Cole Runge	<u>X</u>
Pat Finder-Stone	<u>X</u>	Mary Schlautman	<u>X</u>
Chris Hasselbacher	<u>X</u>	Julie Tetzlaff	<u></u>
Kathy Hillary	<u></u>	Derek Weyer	<u>Exc</u>
George Jackson	<u>Exc</u>	Tina Whetung	<u>X</u>
Debbie Johnson	<u>X</u>	John Withbroe	<u>X</u>
Patty Kiewiz	<u>X</u>	Vacant – BC Exec.	<u></u>
Byia Martin	<u>X</u>	Vacant – BC Board	<u></u>
Barbara Natelle	<u></u>	Vacant – BC Human Svcs	<u></u>

OTHERS PRESENT: Devon Christianson, Lisa J. Conard, and Mai Yia Yang.

C. Runge opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

ORDER OF BUSINESS

1. Approval of the January 16, 2012, Transportation Coordinating Committee meeting minutes.

A motion was made by John Withbroe, seconded by S. Popp, to approve the January 16, 2012, Transportation Coordinating Committee meeting minutes. Motion carried.

2. Discussion of bills in the Wisconsin Legislature that would enable the creation of a Fox Cities Regional Transit Authority (SB 456 and AB 574).

Link to SB 456 docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/related/proposals/sb456.pdf

Link to AB 574 <https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/related/proposals/ab574.pdf>

C. Runge stated that Republican Sen. Mike Ellis of Neenah and Democrat Rep. Penny Bernard-Schaber of Appleton support Regional Transit Authority (RTA) enabling legislation for the Fox Valley. The bipartisan proposal would allow municipalities in Outagamie, Calumet, and Winnebago counties to join a Fox Cities RTA and collect a small sales tax to pay for operating assistance and capital items, such as buses, should a public referendum pass.

The last state budget bill dissolved three RTAs, including a proposed RTA for Madison which was just about to go to referendum.

Many hope the proposal for a Fox Valley RTA can eventually lead to similar options for other regions of the state.

L. Conard noted that all the states bordering Wisconsin have RTA enabling legislation in

place.

The State Senate Transportation and Elections Committee held a public hearing on SB 456 on Thursday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m. at the State Capitol. However, with the current session running out of time and a lot of issues on the agenda (mining and others), it is not likely that the RTA legislation will be acted upon this year.

D. Christianson asked why the ability to form and then create a RTA is so important for the Fox Cities and Green Bay area communities.

C. Runge stated that the combination of federal and state dollars allocated to public transportation has been declining. Just a few years ago, federal and state dollars covered approximately 58% of all operating costs. This percentage has been decreasing.

P. Kiewiz stated for 2012, Green Bay Metro budgeted 53%.

C. Runge stated that in addition to this trend, the Fox Cities and Green Bay Urbanized Areas will likely surpass 200,000 people after the new urbanized area boundaries are defined and the 2010 population within the boundaries is calculated. The redefinition of the urbanized areas will occur in the spring and summer of 2012.

Under the current transportation law (SAFETEA-LU and subsequent extensions), public transit systems operating in areas of 200,000 people as of 2013 will lose most of their federal operating funds.

Assuming no changes in federal law, Valley Transit and Green Bay Metro could lose between \$500,000 and \$1.5 million each in federal operating funds.

For Wisconsin public transit systems, the issue is far reaching because all medium-sized systems, including Valley Transit and Green Bay Metro, are placed in the same tier for federal and state funding purposes. The money within the tier is equalized. This means that all systems in this tier would see their operating assistance decrease (Oshkosh, Racine, Waukesha, Janesville, Beloit, Wausau, La Crosse, and others).

L. Conard stated that the 53% combined federal and state support level is what we currently have, and we are facing the loss of even more operating assistance when the 200,000 person rule goes into effect.

S. Popp stated that there is an effort (H.R. 3454) at the federal level to exempt or provide relief for transit systems that provide service in areas just over the 200,000 population. However, despite stated support from Representatives Petri and Ribble, it is unlikely that an exemption will occur.

C. Runge stated that the latest transportation funding proposal from the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee identifies significant reductions in funding for transportation programs including public transit systems.

P. Kiewiz stated that Tom Wittig, Green Bay Metro Director, is in Washington D.C. to meet with our federal elected officials. In addition, Representative Reid Ribble has agreed to meet with Metro staff in Green Bay on Thursday, March 15.

S. Popp stated that if advocacy or letters of support are deemed needed after the meeting with Mr. Ribble, she would be happy to do such.

P. Kiewiz agreed that would be valuable.

3. Round robin discussion about paratransit service.

D. Brown, P. Finder-Stone, D. Johnson, B. Martin, S. Popp, and M. Schlautman had no problems to report regarding the paratransit service their clients/agencies were receiving.

C. Hasselbacher asked P. Kiewiz to review the paratransit renewal process.

P. Kiewiz stated the following:

Approximately 60 days prior to expiration, Metro staff mails the client a postcard stating that their paratransit certification is soon to expire. A portion of the postcard can be sent back to Metro requesting an application packet be mailed directly to the client. Clients need to complete (including a signature from their doctor) and return the application. Metro staff, by law, has 21 days to review a completed application and determine eligibility. The average turnaround time is 7-10 days. An on-site mobility assessment may be required. In some cases, such as when the disability is permanent, an on-site assessment may be waived. Currently, clients must recertify every three years.

P. Kiewiz stated that problems can come into play when the client or client's caregiver waits until the last minute to begin the renewal process. In addition, many applications arrive incomplete. These factors can lead to delays in recertification. P. Kiewiz also noted that the expiration date is on the client's ID card.

Committee members discussed the renewal process.

L. Conard stated other transit systems may handle recertification differently. Some systems have a five-year recertification policy. Other systems allow permanently disabled individuals to forego recertification altogether (e.g. a member for life). It is up to the transit system. L. Conard stated she supports Metro's practice of renewal as it allows staff to receive address change information and to clear the system of clients who no longer use the paratransit system.

P. Kiewiz stated that Metro will accept hard copy, faxed, or emailed applications.

C. Runge asked how the increased enforcement of the "no-shows" policy is proceeding.

P. Kiewiz stated that they have eliminated most of the no-shows.

E. Fels stated that there were 49 no-shows in February, which is down considerably. Most of the no-shows were related to medical trips where the pick-up after appointment is at issue (if the MV vehicle arrives and the client is not available because the appointment goes long, the driver must wait five minutes and then continue on his or her route so as to not delay other passengers). This is considered a no-show and Metro is responsible for a \$10 fee plus fuel costs. It is hopeful that the clients will be willing to transition to the will-call appointment option, where the client can call for a pick-up after the appointment has ended.

P. Kiewiz stated that the Green Bay Transit Commission reduced the number of permitted no-shows to three in a three-month period versus three in a six-month period prior to suspension. If the client chooses, they can pay the \$15 incurred by Metro for one no-show and be reinstated. The client does not have to pay the no-show fee if he or she does not want to, but

the suspension will remain in place if the fee is not paid.

Green Bay Metro provides approximately 5,000 to 5,500 paratransit trips per month. The rate of no-shows is now less than 1% per month. In the past, it had been as high as nearly 10% per month.

C. Runge stated that this is excellent and commended Metro staff for correcting the issue.

J. Withbroe stated that the March 12, 2012, issue of USA Today contains an article stating that fixed route transit ridership is up nationwide. This is also true for Green Bay Metro. The cost of fuel is also on the rise, which can influence people to take public transit for some or all of their trips.

T. Whetung stated the Lakeland Chapter of the American Red Cross continues to receive calls from Medicaid recipients who do not want to use LogistiCare as their transportation trip broker.

4. Other matters.

D. Brown announced that Holly Walton has been hired to replace Barb Zambon as the Transportation Director for NEW Curative.

D. Brown announced that the NEW Curative annual banquet will be held on April 16 and the Lakeland Chapter of the American Red Cross will be honored for its outstanding transportation program. (D. Brown will forward information to C. Runge for distribution to the TCC. All are invited to attend.).

The remaining regular 2012 TCC schedule is as follows:

Monday, June 11, 2012
Monday, September 10, 2012
Monday, December 10, 2012

5. Adjourn.

C. Runge closed the meeting at 10:39 a.m.